

Councilmember Knapp:

I am a Montgomery County resident, I am a Professional Fire Fighter and I am voicing my SUPPORT of Bill 25-08.

In a financial environment that some Council members have described as among the most difficult they have seen, I find it appalling that there is a method for the County to collect revenue, at no insult or injury to the taxpayers, that has not already been adopted.

This revenue stream will augment the funds necessary to maintain the vehicles that are being utilized to deliver this service. By virtue of the Council's approval of over \$30 Million in funding for apparatus (Special Appropriation Resolution 15-1431, 5/2/06), Fire and Rescue apparatus is recognized as a critical problem, both in procuring and maintaining. My example of the need is as follows:

On the 4th of July, 2008, I was the Captain on a fire engine that was built in 1986. While this vehicle had seat belts for all positions, they were only lap belts, not the lap and shoulder restraints that are required in all modern vehicles. While it did have a radio, it did not have the noise reducing head sets with radio communications built in that help reduce the incidents of hearing damage. And while the vehicle had the minimum tools necessary to perform the basic task of a fire engine, this vehicle did not have them secured in a way that would prevent them from injuring any of the Professional or Volunteer Fire Fighters should an untoward event occur. Why? Because the normal fire engine that meets all of the above mentioned criteria was broken and there were no other fire engines that were available to be placed in service.

Approving the collection of these funds would assist in securing and lengthening the life of Fire and Rescue apparatus, assuring modern apparatus is available when things do break and well maintained apparatus is more fuel efficient than apparatus that is 20+ years old.

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